BEYOND THE GATES OF ANTARES

QUICK START GUIDE

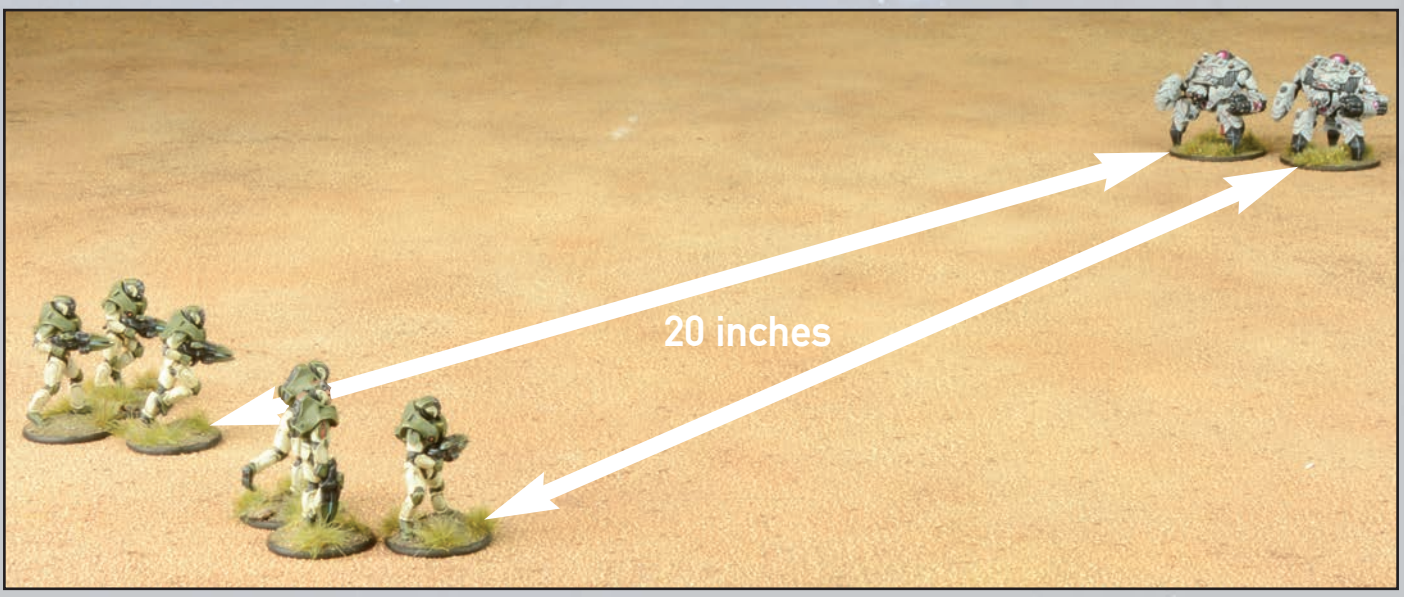
This brief introduction is designed to take new players though the basics of our game and provide an overview of the mechanics of play. It describes a brief encounter between a handful of models and explains how the turn works, how models move and shoot and how squads receive and act upon orders.

CONCORD VERSUS GHAR!

To begin with let's take six of our Concord Strike troopers and two of our Ghar models. These are all **infantry** models and they fight in **squads**. Arrange the models into two separate squads of three Concord Strike Troopers and one squad of the two Ghar.

Clear a little space on a table or on the floor if you like. Place the Ghar squad on one side of the table and the two Concord squads opposite and about twenty inches distant (20").
Models in the **same** squad must keep together in **formation,** so make sure no model in the squad is more than 1" from the group. Models in **different** squads must keep more than 1" away from each other, so make sure the two Concord squads are placed a little distance apart.

Each side has one distinctly coloured **order dice** for each squad. In our case we need two Concord (GREEN) dice and one Ghar (GREY) dice. Take these three dice and put them into a cup, bag or other opaque container. Once you have done this we are ready to begin.



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TURN 1

To begin the turn draw one of the order dice from the container without looking. If it is a Concord dice one of the Concord squads can make an action. If it is a Ghar dice the Ghar squad can make an **action**. For the sake of explanation let's assume a Concord dice has been drawn.

++ CONCORD ACTION ++

There are two Concord squads but only one can make an action so decide which it is to be. Place the dice beside the squad and turn the face of the dice so that it shows the action you wish the squad to make. There are six different actions as follows:

Run The squad moves.

Fire The squad shoots its weapons.

Advance The squad shoots and moves – but it shoots less accurately than it would with a fire action and moves less far than it would with a run action.

Down The squad gets down to make itself harder to shoot at.

Rally If the squad is already *pinned* because it has been shot at, it can make a rally action to try and recover.

Ambush The squad does nothing now and waits for a chance to make an action later.

Don't worry about the Down, Rally and Ambush actions to start with. You can check out these options for yourself later in the Beyond the Gates of Antares rulebook. The Run, Fire, and Advance actions are the ones to get to grips with first. For the sake of our example let's see what happens with each of these in turn.

Run!

Turn the order dice to show that the squad is running. Now move the squad 10" towards the opposing Ghar. Use a tape measure or ruler to measure the distance and move each model as required. You don't have to move the full 10", you can always move less if you want. Once all the models have been moved they must retain a formation with no model separated by more than 1". Leave the order dice beside the squad to show that it has made a run move that turn. This resolves the action.

Fire!

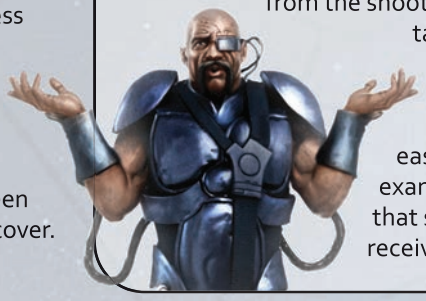
Turn the order dice to show that the squad is shooting its weapons. In our case Concord Strike Troopers are armed with versatile **plasma carbines** that can either fire one very powerful shot or two *rapid fire* shots. Our enemy are well protected with thick armour so we shall choose the more powerful *single* shot.

Take one ten sided dice for each shot. We have three troopers in the squad with one shot each so we shall need three dice. Roll the dice.

To score a hit on the enemy a shooter has to roll a number that is equal to or less than the model's **accuracy** value. The accuracy of a Strike Trooper is 5 but we add a bonus of +1 to this because the squad is using a Fire action to shoot, which means the troopers are talking careful aim with their weapons. So each roll of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 is a **hit** whilst each roll of a 7, 8, 9 or 10 is a **miss**. Note that a '0' on the dice has a value of 10 rather than zero. Let's imagine that our dice have rolled 3, 5 and 8, which gives us 2 hits and 1 miss.

RANGE...

At long ranges it is harder to hit a target. In the case of a plasma carbine a target is at long range if it is more than 20" distance and at extreme range if it is more than 30" distance. If a target is at long range deduct 1 from the shooters' accuracy value. If a target is at extreme range deduct 2 from the accuracy value. Other factors can also make it harder or easier to score a hit; for example, we have already seen that squads making a Fire action receive a +1 bonus for aimed fire.



Any hits scored are allocated to specific models in the target squad. Hits must be allocated as evenly as possible. Because we have 2 hits and 2 models in the Ghar squad it's obvious that in this case each model takes 1 hit. If we had scored just 1 hit in total then the player in command of the Ghar would choose which of the two models is hit. If we had scored 3 hits in total then the player in command of the Ghar would have chosen which of the two models is hit once and which is hit twice.

To allocate a hit place the dice that inflicted the hit beside the model that has been hit.

A model that is hit must take a test to find out if the shot has killed it outright or if it is deflected by the trooper's armour. This is called a **resist** test. The test is taken by the player

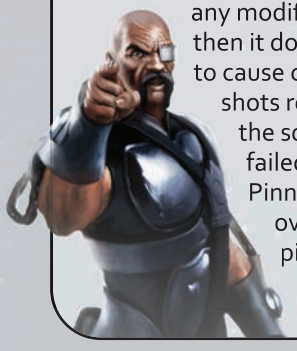
whose squad is hit using the models' **resist value**. Ghar have a very high resist value of 12 making them very difficult to kill. However, because some weapons are more powerful than others we give them a **strike value**, which is deducted from the target's resist value. A plasma carbine has a strike value of 2, so the Ghars' resist value is reduced from 12 to 10.

To take a resist test roll the 'hit' dice that has been allocated to the model. As with an accuracy test, a score that is equal to or less the value tested against is successful and a score that is greater than this value is a fail.

If the test is a success the model is not harmed and if it is failed the model is removed as a casualty. As our Ghar have a value of 10 we might imagine it is impossible for them to fail their resist test because it is impossible to roll more than 10! However, things are not quite so bad as it seems because rolls of a 10 **always fail**, so there is always a chance of failure. Similarly, rolls of a 1 **always pass** so even where modifiers reduce a value to zero or less there is always a chance of success. This is a general principal when testing any value during play: 1s always pass and 10s always fail.

Let's imagine our Ghar pass their resist tests easily, rolling a 6 and 7. They have shrugged off their enemy's fire as we might expect them to do with their thick armour. However, because they have been hit by enemy shooting the Ghar squad suffers a **pin**. Take one of the pin markers and turn the dial to a 1 and place it by the Ghar squad to show it has taken one pin. Shooting is now over. Leave the order dice beside the Concord squad to show that it has fired. This resolves the action.

PINS & HEAVILY ARMOURED TARGETS...



If a target has a resist value of 11 or greater once any modifiers have been taken into account then it does not suffer pins from hits that fail to cause casualties. As our plasma carbine shots reduced the Ghar's resist value to 10, the squad scored a pin even though shots failed to penetrate the Ghar's armour. Pinning the enemy is a vital part of overcoming enemy forces – the more pins a squad has the harder it is for it to make actions.

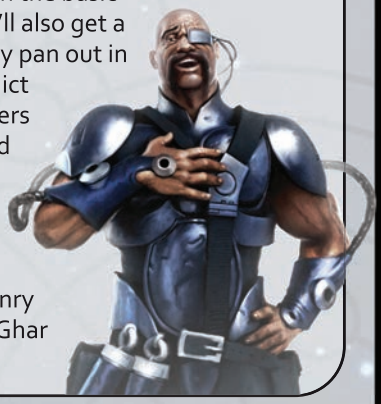
Advance!

Turn the order dice to show that the squad is making an advance action. An advance action is basically a move followed by shooting. However, the move is only 5" rather than a run of 10" and shots don't benefit from the +1 accuracy bonus for aimed fire. An advance is therefore a compromise that allows a squad to move and shoot at the same time, but less effectively than when making a fire or run action.

To make the advance action move the squad as described for a run but only 5" and not 10". Once the squad has moved it can shoot. This is worked out exactly as before but without the benefit of the +1 accuracy bonus, which means rolls of 5 or less will score hits. Let's assume our Concord squad manages to hit the Ghar but fails to inflict any casualties in the same way as before. The unit takes a pin because it is hit. This resolves the action.

SHOOT AND ADVANCE...

If you work through a few fire and advance actions with the Concord squad using the values given above you'll quickly become familiar with the basic mechanics of shooting. You'll also get a sense of how things typically pan out in a straight face-to-face conflict between a few Strike Troopers and Ghar battlesquads – and it doesn't look too hopeful for the Concord does it! Don't worry though – the Concord forces in this set have plenty of other weaponry capable of cracking open a Ghar battlesuit.



++ GHAR ACTION ++

Once the first squad has resolved its action a second order dice is drawn unseen from the container in the same way as before. Incidentally, it doesn't matter which player draws the dice and we normally take it in turns – one player turn 1 the other player turn 2, then the first player again and so on – or we press an observer or other third party to draw the dice for us. For purposes of our example let's imagine we have drawn the Ghar order dice next.

The Ghar squad has exactly the same range of options on the order dice as the Concord squad: run, fire, advance, and so forth. As before we shall only deal with the first three actions for now. Whichever action the Ghar intend to do, because they already have a **pin** the squad must take and pass an **order test** to make its action. If a squad has no pins it can make an action without the need for an order test. If a squad has one or more pins it must take and pass an order test first.

Let's imagine that the Ghar player decides to make an **advance** action. The order dice is placed next to the squad indicating an advance, but before the action can take place a test is required. To take an order test roll a ten-sided dice and compare the result to the squad's command value. The Ghar

squad's **command value** is 7 but this is reduced by the number of pins the squad has. In our case the squad has 1 pin so the command value is reduced to 6. If the dice roll is 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 the test is passed and if the roll is 7, 8, 9 or 10 it is failed. Let's assume the Ghar roll a 3 and passes the test.

When a squad takes an order test then it automatically removes 1 pin whether the test is passed or failed, unless the dice roll is a 1 or a 10. If the roll is a 1 the test is always passed and 2 pins are removed (assuming the squad has 2 pins to remove of course). If the roll is a 10 the test is always failed and no pins are removed.

Because our Ghar squad has passed its order test it removes the single pin and can proceed to make an advance action. Had the squad failed the test it could not make the action as intended and instead would make a **down** action. Think of a down action as the squad missing a turn whilst troopers keep their heads down and take stock of their position. Had the test been failed the Ghar would have turned their order dice to indicate down and their turn would be over.

The Ghar are making an advance action so they move and then they shoot. The models move 5" in the same way as described for the Concord squad and then they shoot their **scourer cannons**. They must choose one of the enemy squads to shoot at. When a squad shoots it shoots all of its weapons at the same target. There are a few exceptions but these need not worry us to start with. So, the Ghar player must first decide which of the Concord squads to shoot at. Let's assume the Ghar shoot at the Concord squad that shot at them – the squad that already has a fire order.

The Ghar have a choice of three different fire modes for their scourer cannon: dispersed, concentrated, and disruptor. The first of these is useful for tackling groups of enemy infantry, whilst the second is a very powerful shot best used against heavily armoured targets, and the last is an inaccurate but useful means of attacking enemies that are sheltering in cover. The preferred shot in our case is the **dispersed** fire mode. This is a rapid firing mode that gives each Ghar trooper no fewer than 3 shots.

Roll three ten sided dice for each Ghar trooper shooting, so six dice in total. The Ghar have an **accuracy value** of 5. This is reduced by a -1 penalty if the shot is at long range, over 20" in the case of a scourer cannon. If the shot is at long range the Ghar squad's accuracy value is reduced by a further –1 because the squad is using rapid fire at long range (-2 in total). We began with our opposing squads close together, so let's imagine the Ghar are not affected by these penalties and need rolls of 5 or less to score hits. For example, rolls of a 2, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 10 would give us an average score of 3 hits. Note that if our squads were more than 20" apart this would reduce the Ghar's accuracy to 3 and the same 'average' rolls would give us only 1 hit. Range is important!

The three hits scored are allocated by the Concord player, three hits against three models is a straightforward one hit on each model. The Concord player now rolls the dice for his resist tests. The Concord Troopers have a resist value of 7 and scourer cannon using dispersed mode have a strike value of 2 reducing this to 5, so the Concord troopers will need to roll 5 or under to avoid falling casualty. Let's give them an example roll of 3, 5 and 8 meaning that two models pass their test and survive whilst one fails and is removed as a casualty. Remove the casualty from play and place a pin marker with one pin next to the Concord squad because it is has been shot at and hit. The Ghar's advance action is now complete. We won't worry about working through the run or fire actions for the Ghar, but feel free to do so if you wish. If the Ghar fire then they will have the advantage of a +1 bonus on their accuracy.

++ CONCORD ACTION ++

The final order dice is drawn from the cup and it is the second Concord dice. An order dice can only be given to a squad that does not already have an order, so it must be given to the remaining Strike Squad. Let's imagine the squad shoots at the Ghar with a fire action in the same way as already described, and yet again the result is a pin but no casualties. Work through the shooting if you wish and remember that the Ghar will pass their resist tests on any score other than a 10.

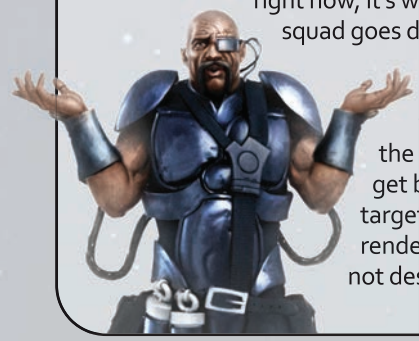
++ TURN END ++

All the order dice have been used which means it is the end of the first turn. In our example we have only three squads and so only three order dice, but in most games an army will have larger forces and more dice. At the turn end the order dice are put back into the container ready for the following turn.

TURN END...

Sometimes you will get the option to keep a dice in play from turn to turn, for example if you have a squad of fast speeders they can retain a run action from turn to turn, whilst if you have a squad set on ambush it can retain its ambush action into the next turn. These are normally choices the player can make, but if a squad has a down action the player must pass a test to get the order dice back into play at the end of the turn.

Although we won't concern ourselves with this detail right now, it's worth knowing that when a squad goes down it doesn't always get up again! Sometimes it stays down into the next turn. The more pins it has the harder it is for a squad to get back on its feet too, so a target can be forced down and rendered ineffective even if it is not destroyed.



TURN 2

Each turn follows in the same way drawing the dice at random from the dice container, allocating each dice to a squad, and resolving the consequent action. So let's imagine a Concord order dice is drawn first once more and allocate the dice to the squad of three Strike Troopers. The other squad has only two survivors and has taken a pin, so an order test will be needed before it can take an action.

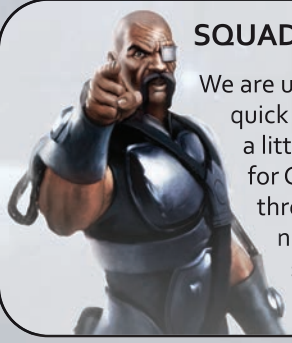
++ CONCORD ACTION ++

We know that the Ghar squad already has 1 pin and we'll shoot with a fire action using the single shot mode once more. So, its three dice needing a 6 or under to score hits as before (accuracy value 5 +1 for aimed fire). Let's say our shots manage to inflict a hit that the Ghar player resists successfully. As the Ghar will pass resist rolls on any roll but a 10 this is quite a likely outcome. Because the Ghar squad has been hit it takes another pin, so turn the pin marker to show 2 pins. This is important!

The Ghar squad now has 1 pin for every model in the squad – 2 pins and 2 models. If a squad is shot at and has 1 or more pins per model as a result then it must take a **break test**. To take a break test roll a ten sided dice and if the score is equal to or under the squad's **command value** the test is passed, if the score is greater the test is failed. As already described for order tests, the command value is reduced by –1 for every pin the squad has. Our Ghar have a command value of 7 and 2 pins, so they will need to score a 5 or under to pass the test. The Ghar player rolls the dice and let's imagine he fails and scores an 8. When a squad fails a break test it immediately goes **down** if it has at least half of its models still remaining, and if it has fewer than half its models remaining it is **destroyed**.

Our Ghar have suffered no casualties, so the squad goes down. Take the Ghar order dice from the dice container and place it next to the Ghar to show it is making a down action.

SQUAD SIZES...



We are using very small squads for our quick start and normally squads are a little larger, five or more models for Concord Strike Troopers and three or more for Ghar, so it normally takes a little longer for squads to reach the point where a break test is needed.

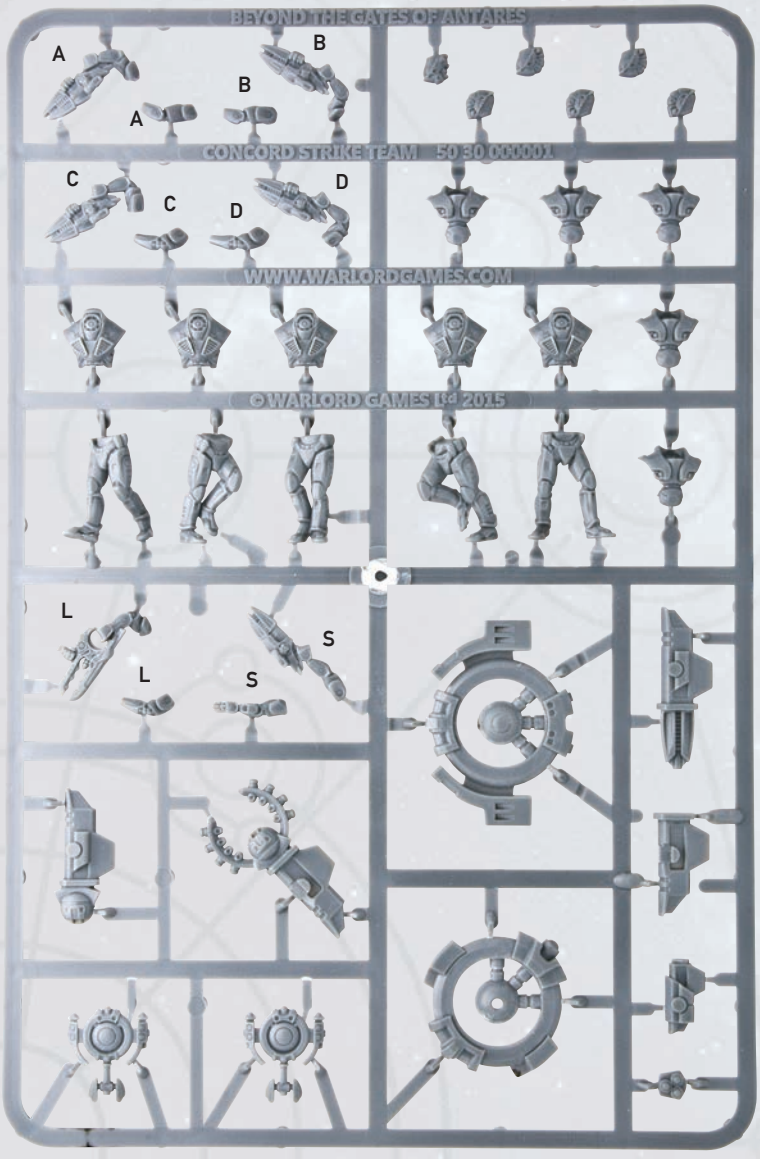
++ CONCORD ACTION ++

There is only one more dice remaining in the cup because the Ghar dice has already been allocated as a down action. This is good news for the Concord player because it means the Ghar are unable to do anything this turn. The Concord squad also has a pin, so it will need a successful order test before it can make its chosen action. Strike Squads have a command value of 8 so even with the –1 penalty for its pin the squad will probably pass its check (it needs to roll 7 or under). Let's assume the test is passed. The squad removes its pin and can make its chosen action.

Rather than working through further actions in detail let's consider our options as they stand.

We could concentrate on shooting (fire action) and try to build up pin markers on the Ghar to force them to stay down. We know they can try to get up again at the end of the turn, but the more pins they have the harder that will be. Also, every time the Ghar take another pin they must also take another break test. Unless a squad has also taken casualties a break test can usually only force it down, but on the roll of a 10 not only is the test always failed but the testers are automatically destroyed regardless of how many casualties they have suffered. So, if we keep adding hits and pins onto the Ghar we can stop them from making actions and eventually they will fail a test. They will then either take casualties or fail a break test and be destroyed.

We could try moving further from the Ghar to keep them at long range (advance or run). Although this would also reduce our own chance of scoring hits, the Ghar's rapid firing scourer cannons suffer from the extra –1 accuracy modifier at longer ranges. During an actual game we would look to move into cover or get out of sight, because standing around in the open like this is just asking for trouble! The Ghar can't take advantage of cover in the same way because they are too big and clumsy, but our Concord troops get a resist bonus of +1 or +2 if they are in cover.



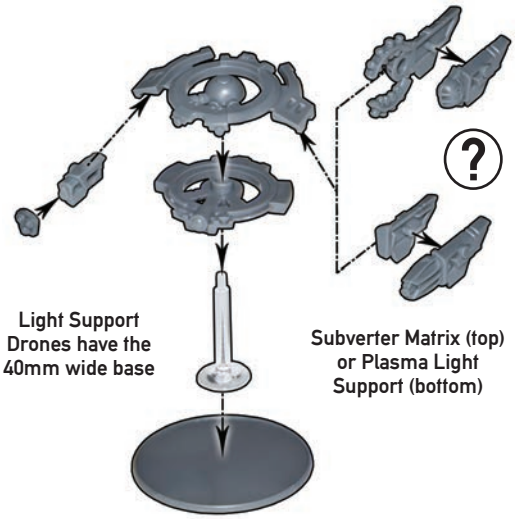
Assembling the plastic miniatures

Follow these simple instructions when building your Beyond the Gates of Antares plastic miniatures. We highly recommend doing a dry run at each stage before applying glue.

Where the question mark (?) is shown, you have a choice to make – be sure you make the correct choice before applying glue!

C3 LIGHT SUPPORT DRONE

Can be built as a C3D1 light support drone with the plasma light support option or as a C3D1/GP Light General Purpose Drone with the subverter matrix



We could also move into contact with the Ghar and fight them in close combat, but this is risky as Ghar are very powerful. With just two troopers remaining this isn't a very good option, but if the squad were larger it might be worth trying. Concord troops often carry plasma grenades that are especially useful against heavily armoured targets like the Ghar, but you need to score as many hits as you can to stand a chance of success. With only two troopers remaining it would be suicidal to tackle the Ghar head on.

FINISHING UP

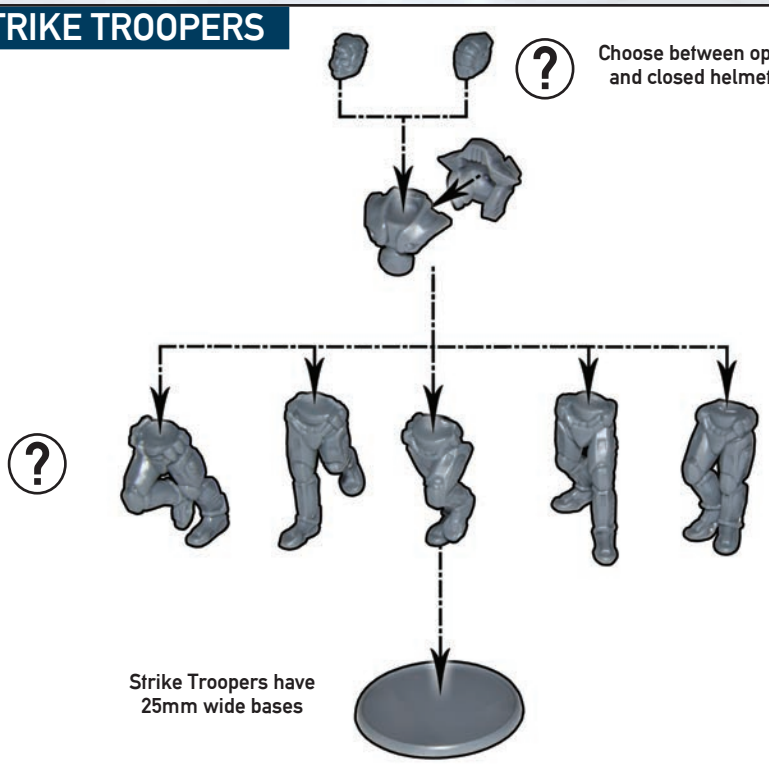
We've covered the basics of issuing orders and making run, advance and fire actions. We've seen how pins affect our ability to issue orders and how they can trigger break tests that can either force a squad down or destroy it altogether. We've seen how hits are resolved and casualties inflicted. This is quite enough to get a sense of how our game plays out for now. You've probably also got a good idea of how powerful those Ghar are and how vulnerable your Strike Troopers can be if they stand around in the open!

The Ghar are certainly versatile and powerful troops, but they suffer from having smaller squads and fewer of them – which means fewer order dice too. The Ghar player must be careful not to squander his forces or expose them to unnecessary risks – if a squad is lost that's a big chunk of fighting power out of the game.

The Concord player has more troops, but only the more heavily armed amongst them stand a good chance of taking out a Ghar trooper. Fortunately, every squad can carry a more powerful version of the plasma carbine – called a plasma lance – and the Concord's light support drones are armed with even more potent plasma light support weapons.

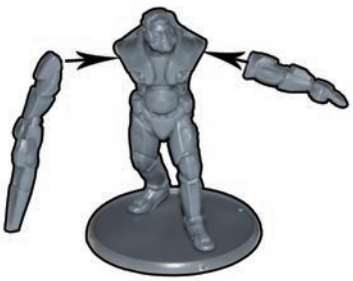
Both Ghar and Concord armies have many more unit options including different kinds of squads and machines, and although very different in character both are powerful in their way. Of course, we have only touched upon the rules and suggested something of the tactical opportunities they present, and you can find out a lot more in the *Beyond the Gates of Antares* rulebook.

C3 STRIKE TROOPERS



All plasma carbine arms are arranged in pairs on the frame (A to E) as shown left.

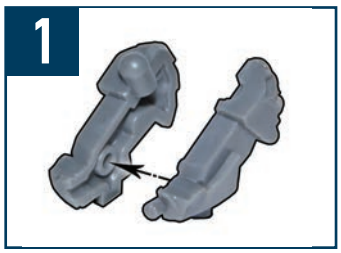
Each squad may replace one plasma carbine with the deadly plasma lance (L).

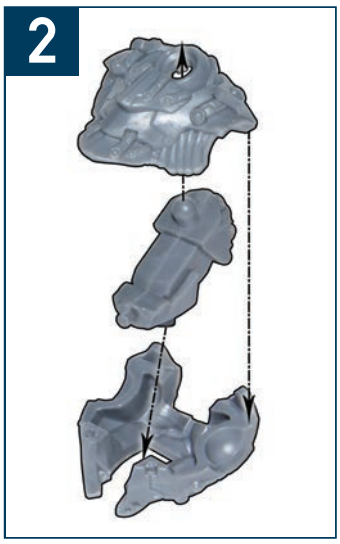


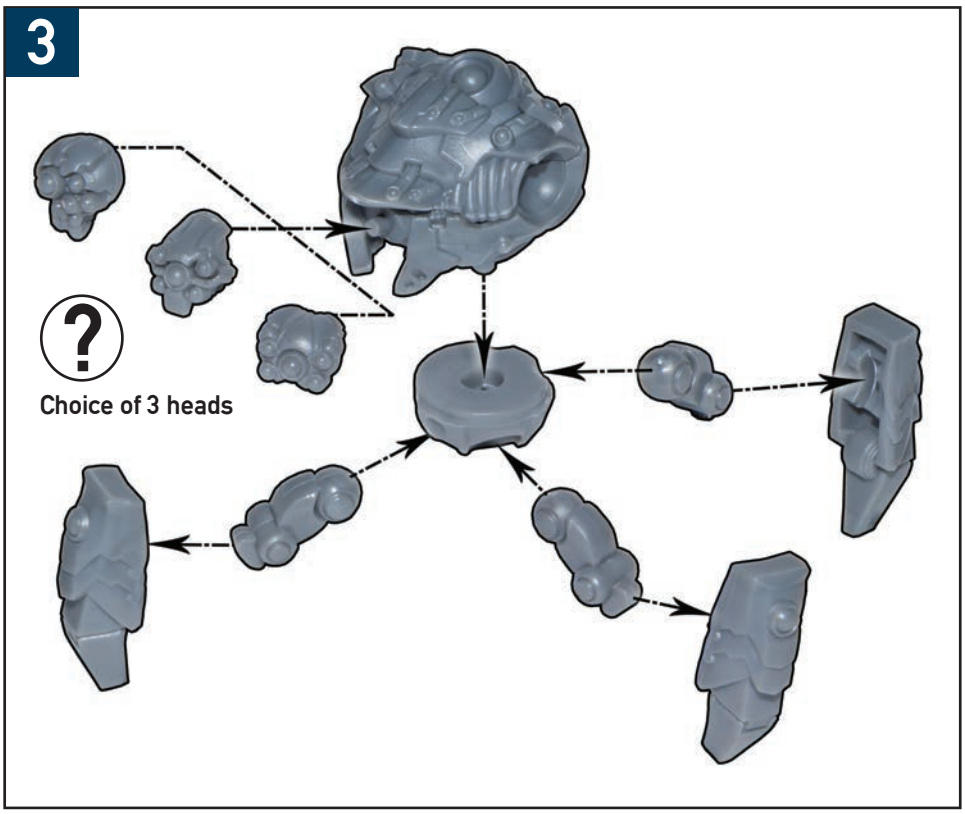
A pair of arms to denote the squad leader (S) include his wrist-mounted X-sling.

C3 SPOTTER DRONE

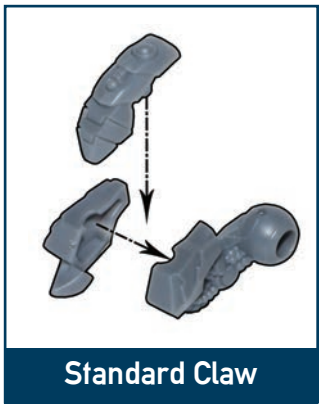
Spotter Drones have 25mm wide bases

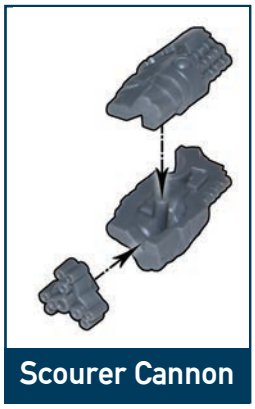




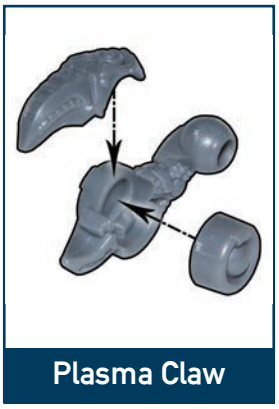


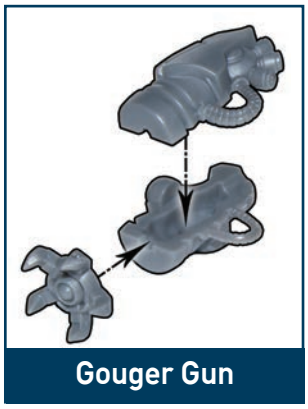
GHAR BATTLE SQUAD





GHAR ASSAULT SQUAD





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